

On Top Of The News

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Website: [www.arubatoday.com](http://www.arubatoday.com)

Thursday, July 30, 2009

*The Royal Farewell Includes A Gift to Lily and Thumbs Up for Martin*

## Radisson bids farewell to Dutch Royals



PALM BEACH -- Visiting Dutch Royal Princess Margriet Francisca of the Nederland and her husband Prof. Pieter van Vollenhoven, bid farewell to the Radisson Aruba Resort Spa & Casino.

The resort is by tradition the home-away-from-home for the Royal Dutch family and in the past on several occasions Queen Beatrix of the Nederland, crown Prince Willem-Alexander and his beautiful Argentinean-born wife, Princess Maxima, and other members of the royal family as well as members of the Dutch government cabinet enjoyed the Radisson's genuine brand of hospitality.

The royals were on the island on an official visit, they were escorted by a large Dutch delegation, and as they were checking out of their hotel the Princess gave a gift to Lily Polsbroek, Senior Sales Manager, in appreciation of the excellent service they received while her husband

gave "thumbs up" to Chef Martin Smeets, who prepared all royal meals during the five-day stay, together with the resort's culinary team.

Also in the lobby to bid the Princess farewell the island's governor who walked her out

to her car, where she personally thanked General Manager Gary Jutz for all the attention she received and enjoyed,

as the resort managers and associates lined up to wave her goodbye. □



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# Champagne & Sushi for Jorge at South Beach Lounge



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under the  
Caribbean sky!*

**Las Ramblas**  
Tapas & Charcoal Grill

The menu features authentic Spanish tapas and entrees such as delicious Seafood Paella, USDA Beef Tenderloin & New Zealand Lamb Chops from the charcoal grill.

Open from 6.00pm - 10.30pm. Closed on Sundays and Wednesdays.  
Reservation recommended  
For reservation call 520-1100 ext. 6154

Visit us at our NEW location on La Cabana's Boardwalk

**LACABANA**  
beach and racquet club



PALM BEACH - On Tuesday evening, an intimate celebration was held for Jorge Zarraga at the new South Beach Lounge in the new Mall all Palm Beach. Friends toasted to Jorge finally joining the 30 something crowd. Delicious Sushi was served by the House of Japan's kitchen and a delicious cake to end the evening. Although Jorge's birthday is officially over, the party has yet to begin. On Friday night, Sr. Frog's is going to continue the celebration by donating a percentage of the cover charge to directly to Jorge's charity of choice. Since Jorge and his friends like to celebrate often in style and he values his friends and their lives, he'd like to promote AHDD "Always Have a Designated Driver!" See you on Friday night and don't drink and drive. □

~ Photos by Julia Renfro ~



## Experience Aruba's Seafood Sensation!

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"This hip restaurant is heaven on earth for seafood lovers"

*Fodor's Travel Guide*



# Royalty plays the Divine Nine



EAGLE BEACH--Prof. Pieter van Vollenhoven married to visiting Dutch Royal Princess

Margriet Francisca of the Nederland, played the Divine Nine golf course at Divi Links



with Managing Director Alex Nieuwmeyer.

They were joined by a member of the Royal Marines and a member of the Security Police, completing the 4-person scramble team.

Van Vollenhoven played like a pro, he knew how to place the ball, and visibly enjoyed the

relaxing outdoor experience.

Van Vollenhoven and Nieuwmeyer fell behind at first but then caught up to an even game at Hole 6. Lost a point at Hole 7 but caught up gain on Hole 8, a pattern leading up to the last hole. In the approach they found water and a sand trap and despite a master putt by Van Vollenhoven, they lost

by one point.

Nevertheless, over a cool beer at Mulligan's Golf Café' Bar & Restaurant van Vollenhoven commented on the great layout of the golf course and how he really enjoyed a terrific game of golf in the heart of Aruba, mid fully-scheduled formal work agendas. □

Fishes & More  
"The Restaurant"

### The Earlybird Menu

Served between 4 pm & 6.30 pm

Soup of the day

Mixed Salad or Ceasar Salad

\*\*\*\*\*

Catch of the day

Filet Mignon

Fettuccini Alfredo

Chicken Breast

\*\*\*\*\*

Hot chocolate fudge Sunday

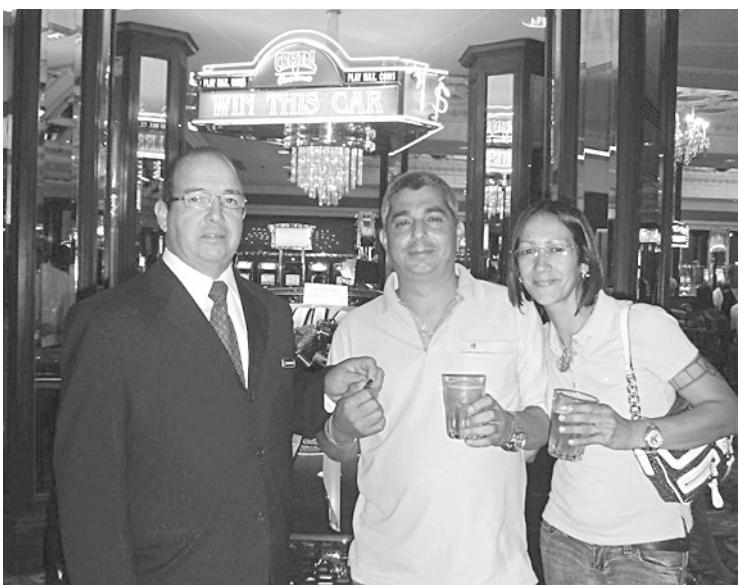
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All main courses are served with potatoes au Gratin & fresh vegetables  
The early bird menu is priced at \$ 21.75  
Service charge not included.

For reservations call 586-3659

Crystal Casino gives away 11 cars in just 7 months

# Roy Kunst wins brand new Ford Mustang



ORANJESTAD-SlotMachine player Roy Kunst recently won a Ford Mustang at the Crystal Casino in the Renaissance Resort. He received the perfect "Bonus" combination on one of his favorite slot machines. Roy and his wife, who live in Santa Cruz were very happy with their beautiful new car. Congratulations to the winners from the management and staff of the Crystal Casino. □

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The drawings will take place each week at 8 PM according to the following schedule:

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July 16th	Seaport	AWG 7500
July 23th	Crystal	AWG 7500 + weekend stay
July 30th	Seaport	AWG 7500 + weekend stay
August 6th	Crystal	AWG 7500
August 13th	Seaport	AWG 7500
August 20th	Crystal	AWG 7500 + weekend stay
August 27th	Seaport	AWG 7500 + weekend stay
September 3rd	Crystal	AWG 7500
September 10th	Seaport	AWG 7500
September 17th	Crystal	AWG 7500 + weekend stay
September 24th	Seaport	AWG 7500 + weekend stay

For more information please call: 523-6318 or 523-6437

Winner must be present at the drawing with valid ID to claim their prize.



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Food Drive organized by Marriott to assist Fundacion Yudami

# Marriott Care Foundation Gives Back To The Community



Ms. Bermudez of Fundacion "Yudami" receives food drive donations from Marriott's associates.

PALM BEACH — In the month of July, the Marriott Care Foundation organized a food drive in order to assist Fundacion "Yudami".

All associates of the three Aruba Marriott properties contributed to donate non-perishable items such as canned food and dry food as well as any basic hygienic necessities that associates could miss from home. Led by Marriott's Human Resources department donation boxes were placed on several locations on property. On July 17, Ms. Bermudez of Fundacion "Yudami" personally picked up dozens of boxes with food and necessities donated by Marriott's associates. She was pleased with the outcome of the food drive.

Fundacion "Yudami" is a non profit organization in Aruba that looks after single parents in need of basic necessities to provide for their families. The foundation operates in cooperation with Social Affairs, churches and schools. The main focus of the foundation is to take care of the local community, assisting single parents with providing education for their children and making sure there is food on the table every day. Marriott's organized food drive was to assist fathers with children, who recently lost their jobs and have to provide for their children during the summer vacation.

The Marriott Care Foundation thanks all its associates and the Human Resources department for their contribution to help the Aruban community.

## What is Marriott Care Foundation?

Since the opening in 1995 the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino has been involved in many community service projects by painting, fixing, building several green houses for different institutions and so making a difference in the community. Because it takes a lot of effort and time to prepare for community activities and the Aruba Marriott wanted to ensure consistency the hotel decided to establish a committee to dedicate itself to ensure the Spirit to Serve our Communities remains active the whole year, year after year and what community projects will be done. This committee started in 1999 and was named "Aruba Marriott Care Foundation". A total of 600 of Aruba Marriott's associates and managers participate in the program, by authorizing the company to make a designated payroll deduction on behalf of the Foundation, founded in 1999. □

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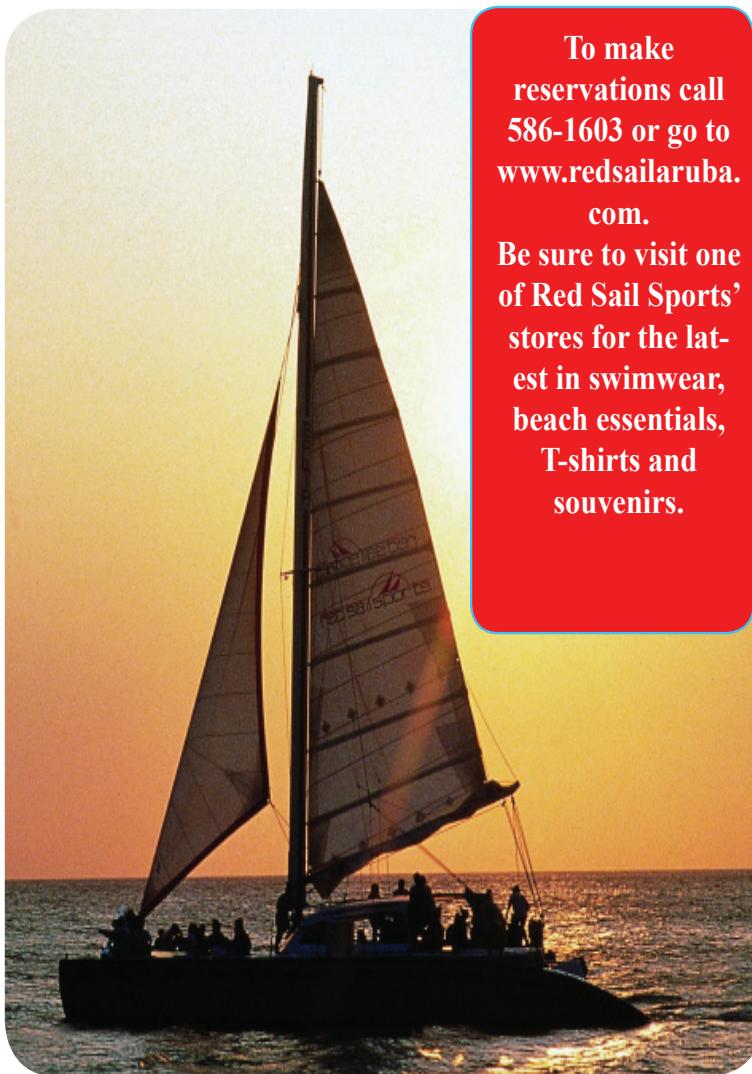
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To make reservations call 586-1603 or go to [www.redsilaruba.com](http://www.redsilaruba.com).

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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

Restaurant  
open daily

Monday - Sat 6 pm - 11  
Sunday 5 pm - 11 pm

For more information or to  
make reservations, please  
call 586-4686. □



# Spectacular Cultural event held for Royal visit



AYO - Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and husband Professor van Vollenhoven attend the closing of the bi-annual cultural exchange event "Crown Jewels" between the three nations this past Monday.



separated, with Princess Margriet visiting the Aruban Red Cross and the Professor attending meeting regarding the co-operation of institutions between the Dutch Kingdom nations. On the pair's final days in the Dutch Islands, the Professor will visit Saba and St Eustatius. The cultural event in Ayo started with typical music from Aruba with a "Caha de Orgel", "Nos Ambiente", and a steelpan "New Generation" who received the public at the entrance to the event. Everyone received a "dushi awa di coco" upon entering the event. The Royal Couple was received by His Excellency the Minister of Labor, Culture and Sports Ramon Lee, Director of the Department of Culture Ruby Eckmeyer and the General Art Coordinator



Freddy Montoya. The Princess found the paintings very interesting and enjoyed the welcome presentation by the youth of Aruba. Asja Dongen and Ruben Trappenberg shared the responsibilities of master of ceremonies for the Royal Night. The youth of Holland, Netherland Antilles and Aruba gave a tremendous presentation under the direction of Jhon Freddy Montoya and Vicky Arends. The night came to a closure with the excellent performance and great rhythms of Youth Extreme. □



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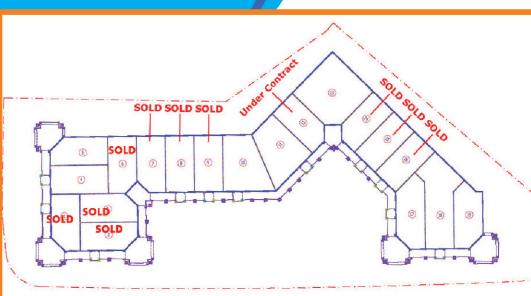
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special for \$19.95. All nights we serve Cold and Hot tapas as appetizers or the delicious Iberian Ham Pata Negra which we import directly from Andalucía. As your main course you should choose our Paella, traditionally prepared on the spot by our chef! Combine this Spanish dish with our

home-made sangria to complete your dinner.

The staff at this popular eatery has set the standard on the island for the term "great service" not only with your dinning pleasure, but recognized as 'the' professionals in assisting guests with the perfect cocktail, paired wine or other beverages.

Of course we saved the best for



last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu. If you're into something different we suggest tasting the Espresso Martini Cocktail as dessert, you won't be disappointed.

The best part about such a good ending is that it guarantees you'll be back for more...

**Casa Tua Barcelona**  
Downtown open from 11.30am to 10.30pm, Sunday from 5pm to 11pm tel. 588 5695

**Casa Tua Palm Beach** open from 5pm to 11pm, tel 586 8470



## BISTRO TASTE OF BELGIUM

**Elegance and affordable luxury!**  
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PALM BEACH - Taste of Belgium's Bistro is located in the intimate courtyard of the Paseo Herencia Mall across from the Holiday Inn Resort. It is cozy and casual: one can have a drink with friends, have a quick bite before grabbing a movie or relax and lounge away the afternoon and evening in the balmy breeze underneath the stars. The Bistro's great selection of Belgian beers has drawn many beer lovers to the mall already, but it is its exquisite food, ample portions and great prices that keep folks coming back for more every night of the week.

The Bistro's menu offers everyone's favorites, but with a culinary Belgian twist. This might be an unusual

presentation, an awesome side dish, a stunning combination, a surprising regional dish or a dessert that takes you to heaven and back a few times. Good service and lots of smiles will surely make the Bistro one of your favorite places to go to. Open for coffee, lunch, drinks, dinner and cocktails.

### Early Bird

When the rays of the sun start fading and the shadows grow a bit longer, many choose for an exceptionally good option for dinner: the Early Bird Special! The restaurant's sundown, 3-course menu is spectacular and its price can't be beat for \$ 25.00.

*Daily 5pm - 7pm.*

OPENING HOURS - RESTAURANT: 10AM - MIDNIGHT | KITCHEN: 10 AM - 11 PM | LUNCH: 10 AM - 5 PM

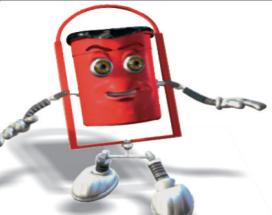
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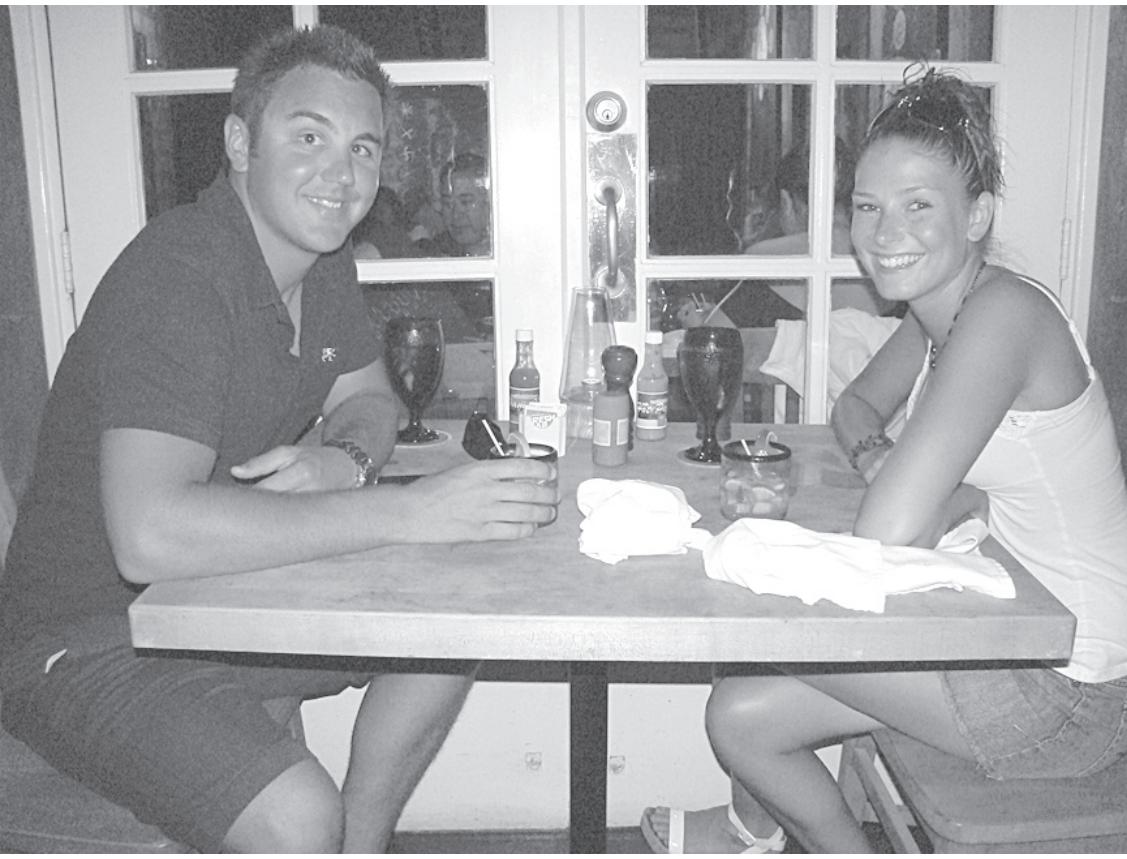
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**KEEP ARUBA CLEAN...**



THANKS FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION

# Steak-lovers meet at Amazonia



PALM BEACH -- Keltie Martin and Jeff Patterson, from LA, vacationing at the Marriott Surf Club are celebrating their first Aruba visit.

They enjoyed different sport activities during the day and in the evening re-connected at Amazonia Churrascaria for a delicious dinner over a few refreshing caipirinhas. Their favorite? The house special, the Garlic Picanha, which they report was the best grilled beef cut, even better than filet mignon!! □



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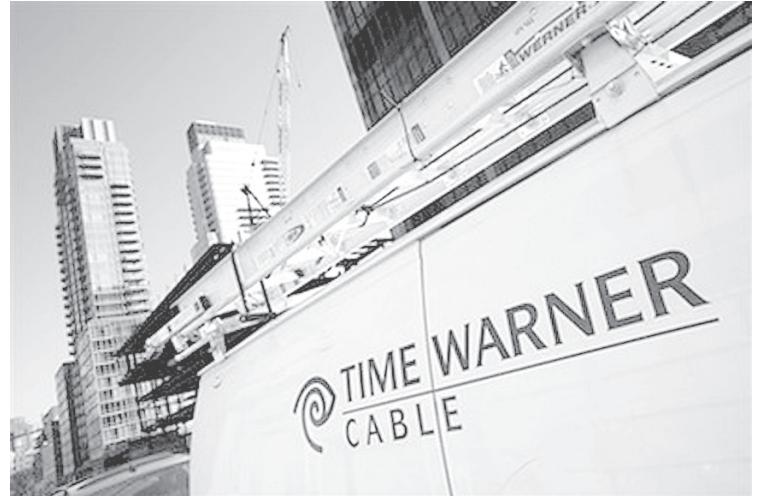
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**BUSINESS****Aruba TODAY****Stocks lose ground on worries about economy's path**

FILE - In this Feb. 2, 2009 file photo, a Time Warner Cable truck is parked in New York. Time Warner Cable Inc., one of the nation's biggest cable TV system operators, said Wednesday July 29, 2009, higher subscription revenue helped boost its second-quarter profit by 14 percent, beating Wall Street expectations.

*(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan, file)*

By TIM PARADIS,  
**AP Business Writer**  
NEW YORK — The stock market is holding up, just not pressing ahead as the economic signs look a little less promising. Stocks had their fourth straight day of incremental moves as commodity prices slid and orders for big-ticket manufactured goods fell, injecting more economic uncertainty into the market.

Investors are uneasy but aren't giving up on stocks. The Dow Jones industrials lost only 26 points on Wednesday and major indexes are still up about 11 percent since only mid-July. Analysts say the market's buoyancy after such a big gain is a welcome sign of stability, but also that more good news is needed for stocks to resume their climb.

For now, though, investors are finding more reasons for concern. The price of oil and raw materials fell after stocks tumbled in China on fears that the growth in that country's economy would slow. That could hurt demand for a range of commodities. A jump in U.S. crude inventories further weighed on the price of oil.

housing, employment and the service industry.

Manny Weintraub, president of Integre Advisors in New York, said some good numbers could bring out more buyers because investors are betting on what the economy will look like in the near future, not what it looks like now.

"The market is a barometer and not a thermometer," Weintraub said. "As long as things are getting better the market can go up."

According to preliminary calculations, the Dow fell 26.00, or 0.3 percent, to 9,070.72. The broader Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 4.47, or 0.5 percent, to 975.15, while the Nasdaq composite index slid 7.75, or 0.4 percent, to 1,967.76.

On Tuesday, stocks finished mixed after several corporate earnings reports and the Conference Board's reading on consumer confidence fell short of expectations.

Energy and materials stocks fell after a drop in stocks in China. The main Shanghai index tumbled 5 percent on fears that China would try to keep its economy from heating up too quickly. A slowdown in China's economy would erode demand for a range of raw materials, including oil and metals.

Investors were also unnerved after U.S. crude inventories rose more than expected last week. The rise prompted worries that weakness in the economy was curbing demand for energy.

Occidental Petroleum Corp. fell \$2.21, or 3.1 percent, to \$69.48, while Schlumberger Ltd. fell \$2.11, or 3.9 percent, to \$52.49.

Light, sweet crude slid \$3.88 to settle at \$63.35 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. □



A workman, who preferred only to be known as Henryk, constructs a new home in Lemont, Illinois, July 27, 2009.

REUTERS/John Gress

**Fed survey sees slowdown moderating, stabilizing**

By Mark Felsenthal

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — The pace of the recession has slowed or stabilized in most areas of the United States, the Federal Reserve said on Wednesday in a report that pointed to protracted job market weakness even as the economy transitions to recovery.

Labor markets across the country were "extremely soft," with little upward pressure on wages, the Fed said in its Beige Book survey of economic conditions through July 20.

Wages and compensation were steady or falling in most areas, said the Fed -- the U.S. central bank. Employers reported different methods of cutting pay in addition to, or instead of, freezing or lowering wages, it added.

Stocks slipped on the report's suggestion that the jobs picture may be gloomy for a while.

"Consumer spending, residential and commercial real estate, tourism, labor markets ... soft, soft, soft, soft, and soft," said Jennifer Lee, an economist with BMO Capital Markets Research in Toronto. "I expected the overall tone to be a little less subdued," she said.

The Fed has slashed benchmark interest rates to near zero and pumped hundreds of billions of dollars into the economy to counter the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Fed officials say they expect growth to return in the second half of the year, but warn they expect the recovery will be sluggish and high unemployment will persist for a while.

The Fed has promised to keep benchmark rates exceptionally low for an extended period and to keep its supportive policies in place to support the fragile turnaround.

Factory activity was depressed in many areas although the Fed said some districts saw signs of modest improvement.

"We passed the eye of the storm about four weeks ago," one North Carolina textile manufacturer told the Fed.

Residential real estate markets were weak in most districts although many reported evidence things were getting better. The outlook for commercial real estate -- which Fed officials have cited as a potential looming problem -- was mixed, with some Fed contacts forecasting further deterioration into late 2010.

Commercial real estate markets weakened in two thirds of Fed districts and remained slow in others, the Fed said. □

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January 1st, 2009

Mystery  
Bonus Jackpot: **SUZUKI SWIFT**  
casino:  
**SEAPORT CASINO**



JACINTHA  
KOCK  
LOEFSTOK  
January 11th, 2009

Mystery  
Bonus Jackpot: **FORD MUSTANG**  
casino:  
**CRYSTAL CASINO**



ALLA  
FISHBEYN  
January 15th, 2009

Mystery  
Bonus Jackpot: **FORD MUSTANG**  
casino:  
**CRYSTAL CASINO**



PREMEHANDERPERSAD  
NAIDJNATH  
MISIER  
February 21st, 2009

Mystery  
Bonus Jackpot: **SUZUKI SWIFT**  
casino:  
**SEAPORT CASINO**



LORENZO  
PADULLA  
February 21st, 2009

Mystery  
Bonus Jackpot: **FORD MUSTANG**  
casino:  
**CRYSTAL CASINO**



MAREK T.  
ZAWADZKI  
February 22nd, 2009

Mystery  
Bonus Jackpot: **SUZUKI SWIFT**  
casino:  
**SEAPORT CASINO**



SIGFRIED  
FRASER  
March 25th, 2009

Mystery  
Bonus Jackpot: **FORD MUSTANG**  
casino:  
**CRYSTAL CASINO**



AMIR  
MACHMUD  
May 15th, 2009

Mystery  
Bonus Jackpot: **FORD MUSTANG**  
casino:  
**CRYSTAL CASINO**



MARTA  
LUCIA  
KOOLMAN  
May 20th, 2009

Mystery  
Bonus Jackpot: **SUZUKI SWIFT**  
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# The escalation of US war plans in Latin America PT 4.

by Rick Rozoff

## US Military: After Iraq, Latin America

Also in April of 2008 the US Air Forces Southern director of operations, Col. Jim Russell, advocated that troops being withdrawn from Iraq be redeployed to the Pentagon's Southern Command which takes in South and Central America and the Caribbean. He stated at the time: "We think, as we move ahead, we will see more of a shift of attention towards the region.

"We're seeing problems right at the mouth of Central America. That's the gateway to our southern border." [37]

On July 12, 2008 the US Navy reestablished its 4th Fleet, encompassing South and Central America and the Caribbean as does the Pentagon's Southern Command, after it was disestablished in 1950 following World War II.

Earlier this year the chief of the Southern Command, Admiral James Stavridis, became NATO Supreme Allied Commander and head of the Pentagon's European Command. Three of the last five NATO top military commanders - Stavridis, his predecessor Bantz John Craddock and Wesley Clark - moved to that post from being head of Southern Command.

In May of 2008, clearly anticipating what has occurred this week, Venezuela warned Colombia not to allow a new US military base in La Guajira near the border with northwestern Venezuela. The latter's president said, "We will not allow the Colombian government to give La Guajira to the empire. Colombia is

launching a threat of war at us." [38]

Less than a week later a US warplane penetrated Venezuelan airspace on a flight from the Netherlands Antilles. The Venezuelan government accused the US of spying on a military base on Orchila Island and "said the U.S. was testing Venezuela's ability to detect intruders and that the

Venezuelan air force was prepared to intercept the plane had it not turned back toward the Caribbean island of Curacao." [39]

Defense Minister Gustavo Rangel said that "This is just the latest step in a series of provocations in which they want to involve our country." [40]

In September a bloody separatist ambush killed eight people in the Bolivian province of Pando. The government expelled US ambassador Philip Goldberg, an old hand at supporting violent secessionist uprisings in Bosnia and Kosovo earlier. The head of the nation's armed forces, General Luis Trigo, warned that "The Bolivian Armed Forces warned on Friday that they will not tolerate any more actions of radical groups or foreign interference in the country's internal affairs." [41]

Toward the end of 2008 Bolivia expelled US Drug Enforcement Administration officers and later announced plans to purchase Russian helicopters for anti-narcotics operations.

On July 22 Bolivian President Evo Morales stated, "I have first-hand information that the empire, through the U.S. Southern

Command, made the coup d'etat in Honduras." [42]

In October of 2008 Ecuador charged the CIA with infiltrating its military and knowing of the Colombian attack on its territory the preceding March. Defence Minister Javier Ponce told newspapers: "The CIA had full knowledge of what was happening in Angostura." [43]

At the same time Colombian Defense Minister Santos broadened his nation's bellicosity by aiming it toward Russia. Completely the creature of Washington and its military that he is, Santos said:

"Russia, with its 16,000 nuclear bombs, has a great desire to be a key player in the world. But its presence in the region will promote a return to the Cold War." [44]

Santos was alluding in particular to recent Russian-Venezuelan naval exercises in the Caribbean and to the fact that Russia has provided Caracas with advanced arms, warplanes and submarines, reflecting a general trend among Latin American nations-including

Bolivia, Ecuador, Argentina and Nicaragua - toward increased military ties with Russia as a counterbalance to traditional American domination of their armed forces and to be able to defend themselves against US and proxy attacks. What Santos and his American sponsors fear is the effective demise of the almost 200-year-old Monroe Doctrine. This March Venezuelan President Chavez labeled Colombian Defense Minister Santos "a threat to regional stability" and a

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John Chemaly Sr.

## Managing Director

John A. Chemaly Jr.

## General Manager

Grace Mary Maduro

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[www.arubatoday.com](http://www.arubatoday.com)

E-mail [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com)

## Editor-in-Chief

Julia C. Renfro

## Contributing Editors

Angela Muzenhofer  
Jan Falcone

## International Editor

Richard Brooks

## Sales Team

Elly Erasmus  
Mareijke Croes  
Wendy Kelkboom

## Page Designer

Dina Maria

## Advertising Coordinator

Sandra Loefstop-Duarte  
[aviso@bondia.com](mailto:aviso@bondia.com)  
[bondia.aruba@gmail.com](mailto:bondia.aruba@gmail.com)

military base and so Washington lost its basing rights there this month. With the corresponding announcement last week by Colombian President Uribe that he was turning five more military bases over to the Pentagon - three airfields and two navy bases - President Chavez was correct in seeing the move as "a threat against us," and warning that "They are surrounding Venezuela with military bases." [47]

Since the overthrow of Honduran President Manuel Zelaya on June 28, led by military commanders trained at the School of the Americas, alarms have been sounded in Latin America and throughout the world that the coup, far from being an aberration or anachronism, may mark a precedent for more in the near future.

And just as in the final months of the Bush presidency and the first seven months of the current one military operations in Afghanistan, for five years given secondary importance in relation to Iraq, have escalated into the world's major war front, so plans for direct US military aggression in Latin America, dormant since the invasion of Panama in 1989, may be slated for revival.

During the past few months the Pentagon has been training the armed forces of Guyana, Venezuela's eastern neighbor, both at home and in the United States. The use of French and Dutch island possessions in the Caribbean for military purposes has already been examined. With the election of Ricardo Martinelli as president of Panama this May putting that country back into the US column, the noose is tightening around Venezuela. Ecuador refused to renew an agreement with the US for the use of its Manta

# Jackson chef recalls doctor's role, final days



**Kai Chase, Michael Jackson's personal chef, is photographed in Beverly Hills, Calif. on Tuesday, July 28, 2009. On the day Michael Jackson died, his personal chef says her first hint of something amiss was when his doctor didn't come downstairs to get the juices and granola he routinely brought the King of Pop for breakfast each morning.**

By LINDA DEUTSCH,  
AP Special Correspondent

LOS ANGELES — On the day Michael Jackson died, his personal chef says her first hint of something amiss was when his doctor didn't come downstairs to get the juices and granola he routinely brought the King of Pop for breakfast each morning.

Kai Chase, a professionally trained chef hired by Jackson to maintain a healthy food regimen, recalled the singer's final days in an interview with The Associated Press. She also spoke about the role of his personal physician, Dr. Conrad Murray, who is now the focus of a manslaughter investigation. Chase said Tuesday that she had gotten used to seeing Murray coming and going from the mansion. The doctor usually arrived about 9 or 9:30 p.m. and would go upstairs to Jackson's room, and she said she would not see him again before she

left — sometimes late in the evening — but understood he was staying the night. In the morning, when she arrived for work, Chase said she would see the doctor coming down the steps carrying oxygen tanks. When Murray didn't come downstairs the morning of June 25, "I thought maybe Mr. Jackson is sleeping late," Chase said.

"I started preparing the lunch and then I looked at my cell phone and it was noon. About 12:05 or 12:10 Dr. Murray runs down the steps and screams, 'Go get Prince!' He's screaming very loud. I run into the den where the kids are playing. Prince (Jackson's oldest son) runs to meet Dr. Murray and from that point on you could feel the energy in the house change.

"I walked into the hall and I saw the children there. The daughter was crying. I saw paramedics running up the stairs."

At that point, Chase said, the small group that was gathered — the children, their nanny, a housekeeper and Chase — held hands and began to pray. As paramedics raced up to the room, Chase recalls, "We were all praying, 'Help Mr. Jackson be O.K.'

"Then everyone was very quiet."

At about 1:30 p.m. she said security guards told her and other staff to leave the property because "Mr. Jackson was being taken to the hospital."

When she came outside, she said, ambulances were in the courtyard and a crowd had gathered.

Chase, 37, who has cooked for other celebrities and comes from a show-business family, was hired by Jackson in March, let go in May, then returned on June 2. She said the pop star's focus was on fresh, healthy food for him and the children. She said she prepared meals for the family and occasionally for Murray. She said Jackson was in training for his upcoming shows in London and told her: "You have to take care of me."

On most days, she said, Murray would bring Jackson the special fruit juice drinks Chase prepared for him, followed by granola with almond milk. For lunch, Jackson would eat with the children from a menu that included such things as spinach salad and chicken.

Murray sometimes joined them for dinner, which might be a seared ahi tuna. She said the doctor conferred with her about the 50-year-old pop singer's food and made sure that he ate. The only oddity was the oxygen tanks. Chase said she never asked about the purpose of the oxygen and she saw no sign that Jackson was on drugs or was in failing health.

"Normally in the morning, he would bring oxygen tanks from upstairs downstairs, one in each hand," she said.

Authorities searched Murray's Las Vegas home and medical office Tuesday as part of an investigation that included raids last week of his clinic and storage in Houston.

With toxicology reports pending, investigators are working under the theory that the powerful anesthetic propofol caused Jackson's heart to stop, a law enforcement official told The Associated Press. Murray told investigators he regularly administered the drug to help Jackson sleep, and had



**Michael Jackson, pictured in 2005. Police and federal agents swooped on the Las Vegas home of Michael Jackson's doctor as speculation about possible criminal charges in the case intensified.**

(AFP/Pool/File/Ric Francis)

done so sometime in the early morning of June 25, according to the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation is ongoing. Propofol is supposed to be administered only in monitored medical settings by trained personnel; the official told AP

that Murray left the bedroom and returned to find the star unresponsive. Police have said Murray is cooperating and have not labeled him a suspect, and his lawyer, Edward Chernoff, has said the doctor "didn't prescribe or administer anything that should have killed Michael Jackson."

Like Murray, Chase said she was hired to accompany Jackson to London for his comeback concerts and the request was personally made to her by his 12-year-old son, Prince Michael II.

"Prince said, 'Daddy wants me to tell you he wants you to go to London with us,'" she recalled. "I said, 'Tell your daddy that I'm pleased and honored.'

She said she had already filled out paperwork and submitted a copy of her passport to the Jackson staff and expected to leave for London on July 3.

On June 23, she said Jackson told her: "I'm packed and I'm ready to go." Two days later, he was dead.

It was the end of her dream job

and an idyllic time in Chase's life, a time that had begun in March with a call from Jackson's assistant, Michael Williams. She was told that "a client" wanted her services as personal chef but she was not told the client was Jackson until she was hired.

"I couldn't believe it," she said. "I asked him if I was on 'Candid Camera.' I said, 'Am I being punked?'"

She said Jackson had seen her resume which included jobs cooking for Macy Gray and Jamie Foxx as well as catering a fund raiser for President Barack Obama. She said he also knew she was from a multiracial background and her godfather was Redd Foxx.

But before she started she had to pass muster with three other people: the Jackson children.

"I came to the house and the first people I met were the kids. They started interviewing me," she said. "They told me: 'We're into healthy eating.'"

When they approved her, she went to work and "we developed a really great bond."

Most days, she said, Jackson made a point of having both lunch and dinner with the children, Prince, 11-year-old Paris and 7-year-old Prince Michael II, known as Blanket, and each meal was preceded by Paris saying grace. □



**Officials remove boxes of documents from the offices of Michael Jackson's personal doctor, Dr. Conrad Murray, in Las Vegas on Tuesday, July 28, 2009.**

(AP Photo/Isaac Brekken)



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On Top Of The News

Email: arubatoday@gmail.com

Thursday, July 30, 2009



President Barack Obama responds to a question during a town hall meeting on health care in a Kroger supermarket in Bristol, Va., Wednesday, July 29, 2009.

Associated Press

## Deal with 'Blue Dogs' sets up health care vote

By DAVID ESPO

AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON — After weeks of turmoil, House Democrats reached a shaky peace with the party's rebellious rank-and-file conservatives Wednesday to clear the way for a vote in September on sweeping health care legislation.

Bipartisan Senate negotiators reported progress, too, on a bill said to extend coverage to 95 percent of all Americans without raising federal deficits.

"We're on the edge, we're almost there," said Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa, the senior Republican involved in the secretive talks, although a fellow GOP participant, Sen. Mike Enzi of Wyoming, dissented strongly.

Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., chairman of the Finance Committee, said preliminary estimates from congressional budget experts showed the cost of the emerging Senate plan was below \$900 billion and would result in an increase in employer-sponsored insurance — conclusions that may reassure critics who fear a bloated bill that prompts businesses to abandon the coverage they currently provide.

Across the Capitol, House Democratic leaders gave in — at least temporarily — to numerous demands from rank-and-file rebels, so-called Blue Dogs from the conservative wing of the party who had been blocking the bill's passage in the last of three committees.

The House changes, which drew immediate opposition from liberal lawmakers, would reduce the federal subsidies designed to help lower-income families afford insurance, exempt additional businesses from a requirement to offer insurance to their workers and change the terms of a government insurance option.

At their core, both the House bill and the plan under negotiation in the Senate are designed to meet President Barack Obama's goals of spreading health coverage to millions who now lack it, while slowing the skyrocketing growth in health care costs nationally.

Obama has placed the issue atop his domestic agenda, and as recently as two weeks ago was pressing the House and Senate insistently to pass separate bills by the end of July or early August. The White House issued a statement praising the development in the House, and with appearances in North Carolina and Virginia, the president sought to minimize the significance of the slippage in his timetable. "We did give them a deadline, and sort of we missed that deadline. But that's OK," Obama said. "We don't want to just do it quickly, we want to do it right."

In his appearances, Obama stressed that any legislation he signs will include numerous consumer protections, including a ban on insurance company denials of coverage based on pre-existing medical conditions.

Continued on Next Page

## Microsoft, Yahoo team up to ding Google with Bing



Microsoft employee Joshua Schnoll sits near a sign promoting Bing, Microsoft's recently upgraded search engine, in a company cafeteria Wednesday, July 29, 2009, in Redmond, Wash. The extended reach Microsoft Corp. is gaining with its new partnership with Yahoo Inc. will let it introduce Bing to more people.

Associated Press

JESSICA MINTZ  
MICHAEL LIEDTKE  
AP Technology Writers

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Microsoft Corp. has finally roped Yahoo Inc. into an Internet search partnership, capping a convoluted pursuit that dragged on for years and setting the stage for them to make a joint assault against the dominance of Google Inc.

Continued on Page B5



U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, left, walks to his plane with the top US commander in Iraq, Gen. Ray Odierno as he prepares to depart Baghdad to Irbil, in Baghdad, Iraq, Wednesday, July 29, 2009. Gen. Ray Odierno identified the tension in northern Iraq as the number one driver of instability.

Associated Press

## Gates: Some U.S. troops maybe leaving Iraq early

ANNE GEARAN  
AP National Security Writer

ABOARD A U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT (AP) — A combat brigade of 5,000 American troops may be brought home early from Iraq if the trend of reduced violence holds, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Wednesday.

Continued on Page B6



Acting Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Chairman Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., right, huddles with the committee's ranking Republican Sen. Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., before the start of the continuation of a mark-up of the Affordable Health Choices Act, on Capitol Hill, Monday, July 13, 2009, in Washington.

**BLUE DOGS***Continued from Page B1*

A White House fact sheet left room for insurers to continue charging higher premiums based on prior health problems.

Rep. Mike Ross of Arkansas, a leader of conservative and moderate "Blue Dog" Democrats, said the changes agreed to by the leadership in the House bill would reduce

**Associated Press**

costs in the bill by about \$100 billion over 10 years. But the new break for small businesses, among other changes, also increased costs substantially, so it wasn't clear that the deal actually generated net savings.

While Baucus reported the Senate Finance measure carried a price tag of under \$1 trillion, congressional officials said it included only

the cost of the first year of a 10-year, \$245 billion program to increase doctor fees under Medicare. House Democrats used a similar sleight of hand, excluding the entire \$245 billion when claiming their measure wouldn't add to the deficit.

The House deal was worked out over hours of talks that involved not only Democratic leaders but also White House officials eager to advance the bill. Senior congressional aides cast it as a temporary deal, saying leaders had not committed to support it once the bill advances to the floor of the House in the fall.

As word of the agreement spread, liberals fired back. "We do not support this," said Rep. Lynn Woolsey, D-Calif., co-chair of the Progressive Caucus. "I think they have no idea how many people are against this. They can't possibly be taking us seriously if they're going to bring this forward."

Plans to convene the Energy and Commerce Committee for a vote slipped until Thursday

as leaders sought to allay concerns of liberals.

"We just need to get everybody on board," said Rep. Frank Pallone, D-N.J., who chairs the panel's subcommittee on health.

Whatever the longer-term budgetary or political ramifications, Democrats said the way was now clear for the committee to approve its portion of the legislation, the last step before it comes to the floor for a vote.

"We're hoping to get a bill out before we leave ... this week," said Rep. Henry Waxman, D-California, the panel's chairman. In the Senate, Baucus, Grassley and two other senators from each party have been negotiating for weeks in hopes of agreeing on compromise legislation. Both men face considerable pressure from their respective parties — Baucus not to stray too far from Democratic objectives, Grassley not to hand the president a political victory.

Republican Sen. Enzi dissented strongly from any impression

that a deal was imminent. "There are big issues that haven't been resolved. We haven't even gotten to the little issues," he told reporters. He also minimized the importance of Baucus' claim, saying the Congressional Budget Office has yet to provide a cost estimate "because no precise bill language is available yet." Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has given Baucus months to see compromise across party lines is possible, and he told reporters during the day he expects a bipartisan plan to emerge.

The pace of decisions appears to have accelerated in recent days, with negotiators all but settling on a tax on high-cost insurance plans to help pay for the bill, as well as a new mechanism designed to curtail the growth of Medicare over the next 10 years and beyond. More problematic from the Democrats' point of view is a tentative agreement to omit a provision in which the government would sell insurance in competition with private industry. □



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# Arrests in health care fraud busts across U.S.

KELLI KENNEDY

Associated Press Writer

MIAMI (AP) — Federal authorities arrested more than 30 suspects, including doctors, and were seeking others in a major health care fraud bust Wednesday in New York, Louisiana, Boston and Houston, targeting scams such as “arthritis kits” — expensive braces that many patients never used.

More than 200 agents worked on the \$16 million bust that included 12 search warrants at health care businesses and homes across the Houston area, where the bulk of the arrests were made.

Federal authorities say those businesses were giving patients “arthritis kits,” which were nothing more than expensive orthotics that included knee and shoulder braces and heating pads. Patients told authorities they were unnecessary and many never even received them. But health care clinic owners billed between \$3,000 to \$4,000 for each kit.

Houston’s other scam involved billing Medicare, the federal health care program for the elderly, for thousands of dollars worth of liquid food like Ensure for patients who can’t eat solid food. Authorities said clinic owners never distributed the food to patients. In some cases, clinic owners billed patients who were dead when they allegedly received the items.

It’s the third major sweep since Attorney General Eric Holder, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced in May they were adding millions of dollars and dozens of agents to combat a problem that costs the U.S. billions each year.

Using about a dozen agents in targeted cities, including



Federal agents escort suspects out of the FBI offices in Houston on Wednesday, July 29, 2009. Federal authorities arrested more than 30 suspects, including doctors, and were seeking others in a major Medicare fraud bust Wednesday in New York, Louisiana, Boston and Houston.

Associated Press

Miami, the Medicare Fraud Strike Force, has recovered \$371 million in false Medicare claims and charged 145 people across the country in just two months.

Two shocked female employees arriving for work Wednesday morning at Memorial Medical Supply in a strip mall in southwest Houston were met by federal agents. Authorities confiscated paperwork and a computer. Owners of the business did not respond to calls from the Associated Press.

The suspects arrested Wednesday in Houston will make court appearances Thursday morning. Suspects in Boston, New York and Louisiana were to have first appearances later Wednesday.

The first strike force started in 2007 in Miami, a city authorities say is responsible for more than \$3 billion a year in Medicare fraud. Clinic owners there would bill Medicare dozens of times for the same wheelchair, while never giving the medical equipment to patients. The problems have become more complex since then. Officials say the suspects have moved into more sophisticated scams including home health care, physical therapy and infusion drugs. They’ve even started tapping into Medicaid Advantage, which allows the elderly and disabled to get benefits through private health insurers. The plans receive a government subsidy and generally offer more benefits

than traditional Medicare. Federal authorities say Miami residents are also moving on to other cities, bringing their scams with them.

Strike force teams, each led by a federal prosecutor and a handful of agents, were started in Los Angeles, Detroit, Houston in the past year. Since 2007, strike forces in Miami, Detroit and Los Angeles have indicted more than 293 suspects and organizations that collectively have billed the Medicare program for more than \$674 million.

Agencies participating in the busts Wednesday included the FBI, the HHS Office of the Inspector General, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Texas Attorney

General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

Along with issuing indictments, authorities freeze bank accounts and seize everything from Rolls Royce’s to million dollar homes purchased with funds stolen from Medicare.

Suspects are being charged not just with health care fraud, but all relevant conduct. That means average prison sentences 50 percent more than the overall national average sentence in federal health care fraud cases in 2008.

While authorities are gratified by the arrests, the program’s purpose is more than punitive. It’s also about deterrence.

Deputy Attorney General David W. Ogden says the interagency partnership is unprecedented in authorities’ ability to track Medicare fraud “as it’s happening, using real-time data analysis of Medicare billing records.”

In the past, authorities have struggled to catch up with fast-moving crooks. By the time local authorities are alerted to potential fraud, it’s already been committed.

“We are also working together across the federal government on important new innovations in the way we do business on the front end, to try and prevent crime like this from happening in the first place,” said Bill Corr, Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services. □


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# Dems warn GOP of backlash for opposing Sotomayor



Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., looks on at right as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nev. takes part in a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, July 29, 2009, to discuss Supreme Court nominee Sonia Sotomayor.

Associated Press

By JULIE HIRSCHFELD DAVIS

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Senate debate over Supreme Court nominee Sonia Sotomayor turned bitter Wednesday, after Democrats warned the GOP it would pay a steep price for opposing the judge who would be the first Hispanic justice, and a top Republican charged they were playing destructive racial politics.

Majority Leader Harry Reid implored Republicans Wednesday to join Democrats in voting to confirm Sotomayor next week, warning that GOP opposition would bring the same sort of public backlash that followed the party's spirited opposition to measures that would have given some illegal immigrants a chance to gain legal status. "I just think that their voting against this good woman is

going to treat them about the same way that they got treated as a result of their votes on immigration," said Reid, D-Nev.

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, the head of his party's Senate campaign committee and a Sotomayor opponent, shot back that Reid and other Democrats were trying to exploit the nomination and "giving cover to groups and individuals to nurture racial grievances for political advantage."

"I don't think it influences people's votes, but what it does encourage is a very poisonous — indeed a very toxic — tone of destructive politics," Cornyn told The Associated Press. "They ought to be ashamed of themselves." Reid's comments and the heated response they drew highlight the incendiary political dynamics surrounding next week's vote to confirm President Barack Obama's first high court nominee, the daughter of Puerto Rican parents who was raised in a South Bronx housing project and educated in the Ivy League before spending 17 years on the federal bench. There is

little doubt that Sotomayor, 55, will be confirmed with majority Democrats backing her solidly and a handful of Republicans joining them.

But the debate over her nomination has raised tricky questions of identity politics for both parties. Republicans are torn between a desire to please their conservative base by opposing Sotomayor and a concern that doing so could bring a Hispanic backlash. The dilemma is particularly vexing for senators from states like Cornyn's where more than one third of the population is Latino.

Democrats, too, risk inviting public ire if they are seen to be using Sotomayor's race as a cudgel against Republicans rather than promoting her based on qualifications and record — particularly in the age of Obama's "post-racial" politics.

The decision on how to vote on her confirmation was made more difficult in recent days for some Republicans and Democrats from conservative-leaning battleground states after the National Rifle Association, which has a loyal

and politically active base of members, announced that a vote to confirm Sotomayor would count against senators in the group's annual candidate ratings. The NRA calls Sotomayor "hostile" to the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. Since the NRA's threat, no Republican or conservative Democrat has come out publicly to support Sotomayor.

Three Republicans, Sens. Richard Burr of North Carolina, Bob Corker of Tennessee and Jim DeMint of South Carolina, announced Wednesday that they planned to vote "no."

Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., the Judiciary Committee chairman, said he was "disappointed" that more Republicans hadn't sided with him in support of Obama's nominee. His panel's vote Tuesday to send Sotomayor's nomination to the full Senate was nearly along party lines, with just one Republican, Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, breaking with the party to back her.

Reid and Leahy appeared at a Capitol Hill news conference with a crowd of activists representing civil rights, Hispanic and women's groups, among others who are enthusiastically backing Sotomayor.

"She knows the law. She knows how to apply the law. She understands the role of a judge. She understands the role of the courts. There is no mystery about this nominee," Leahy said. "Hers is a truly American story, and what a story, and what a model this is going to be for others in America."

Most Republicans, though, say they don't trust Sotomayor to keep her personal prejudices and opinions out of the courtroom.

Burr said in a statement that the judge has "let her personal beliefs cloud her judgment." DeMint said she "has not inspired confidence that she will consistently base her decisions on our Constitution and laws," citing in particular her stance on gun and abortion rights. □

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**BING****Continued from Page B1**

The 10-year deal announced Wednesday gives Microsoft access to the Internet's second-largest search engine audience, adding a potentially potent weapon to the software maker's Internet arsenal as it tries to better confront Google, which is by far the leader in online search and advertising. Microsoft didn't have to give Yahoo an upfront payment to make it happen, as many Yahoo investors had been counting on ever since Microsoft dangled \$1 billion last summer in an attempt to forge a search partnership then.

Google tried to stop Yahoo from falling into Microsoft's camp. Last year it formed its own proposed search advertising deal with Yahoo, only to be forced to retreat from that alliance after U.S. antitrust officials threatened to sue.

Now the extended reach Microsoft is gaining will let it introduce its recently upgraded search engine, called Bing, to more people. The Redmond, Washington-based software maker believes Bing is just as good, if not better, than Google's search engine. Taking over the search responsibilities on Yahoo's highly trafficked site gives Microsoft a better chance to convert Web surfers who had been using Google by force of habit.

"Microsoft and Yahoo know there's so much more that search could be," said

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Microsoft Chief Executive Steve Ballmer. "This agreement gives us the scale and resources to create the future of search."

Even with Yahoo's help, Microsoft has its work cut out. Combined, Microsoft and Yahoo handle 28 percent of the Internet searches in the United States, well behind Google's 65 percent, according to online measurement firm comScore Inc. Google is even more dominant in the rest of the world, with a global share of 67 percent compared to a combined 11 percent for Microsoft and Yahoo.

In return for turning over the keys to its search engine to Bing and promoting it, Yahoo will get to keep 88 percent of the revenue from all ads that run alongside search requests on its site for the first five years of the deal. Yahoo also will have the right to sell search ads on some Microsoft sites.

Yahoo estimated the deal will boost its annual operating profit by \$500 million and save the Sunnyvale, Calif.-based company about \$275 million on capital expenditures a year because it won't have to invest as much in its own search technology. An unspecified number of Yahoo engineers will lose their jobs as the company scales back, Yahoo Chief Executive Carol Bartz told analysts in a Wednesday conference call.

The deal isn't expected to close until early next year, and then it could take another two

years before all the pieces of the partnership are in place worldwide. The companies first will give antitrust regulators time to review the proposed partnership's effects on the Internet ad market and then it will take time to stitch together their different technologies.

Shares of Yahoo plunged \$1.91, or 11.1 percent, to \$15.31 in late morning trading, as investors expressed disappointment over the fact that the company won't be getting an immediate windfall. Microsoft shares edged up 7 cents to \$23.54 while Google shares shed \$6.38, or 1.4 percent, to \$433.47.

"I think the market hasn't figured out that there's not much I can do with an upfront payment," Bartz said in a Wednesday interview.

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The screenshot shows the Bing search results for the query "fourth of july". The results are organized into several sections: "ALL RESULTS", "Images", "Related Searches", and "Encarta Encyclopedia". The top result is a link to the official White House website for the Fourth of July. Other results include links to various websites about Independence Day, such as USA.gov, USAtoday.com, and USacyclinks.com. The sidebar on the right contains a quote from the US Constitution and a link to the "Go to the page" button.

In this image provided by Microsoft Corp., a screen shot of the Bing search engine is shown. Microsoft Corp. has finally roped Yahoo Inc. into an Internet search partnership, capping a convoluted pursuit that dragged on for years and finally setting the stage for the rivals to make an all-out assault against the dominance of Google Inc.

Associated Press

revenue at no cost. That's what's important on an ongoing basis. A one-time upfront payment, what am I going to do with it? Collect interest on it every year? That doesn't help me with" Yahoo's finances. □



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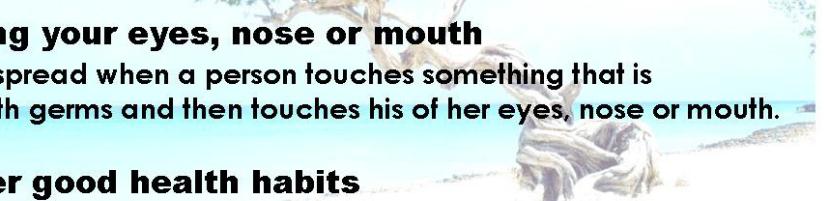


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### LEAVING IRAQ

**Continued from Page B1**

It was the first suggestion that the Obama administration might rethink its decision to keep as many forces in Iraq as possible this year. Obama has settled on a gradual withdrawal plan despite his opposition to the war as a candidate.

White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said later that "conditions on the ground" will dictate any quickening of the withdrawal pace.

"We certainly agree that if conditions on the ground

continue to improve it's possible that timetable could be accelerated," Gibbs said Wednesday during a briefing aboard Air Force One en route to Bristol, Virginia, with the president. "But we've done nothing concrete except continue to watch the situation. Obviously there are a lot of—lots of political reconciliation that still has to be worked on and a security situation that we have to be mindful of even as many in the world focus on Afghanistan and Pakistan."

Earlier in the day, Gates told

reporters aboard a Defense Department plane that "I think there's at least some chance of a modest acceleration" in troop withdrawal this year. U.S. officials had worried that last month's formal handover of control of Iraqi cities to Iraqi security forces might erode gains already made. But Gates said Gen. Ray Odierno, the top U.S. general in Iraq, told Gates the security situation is better than expected.

Attacks directed at Iraqi civilian targets spiked in a rash of bombings for about 10 days leading up to the formal withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Iraqi cities on June 30, but violence overall has hovered at far lower levels than previous years. Attacks on U.S. soldiers also have dropped off sharply.

An Associated Press tally shows seven U.S. troop deaths this month, the lowest monthly total so far for the Iraq war since it started in 2003.

The United States has about

130,000 forces in Iraq, with current plans calling for most combat forces — or more than 100,000 troops — to remain in the country until after Iraqi national elections in January. It was largely because of Odierno's concerns that the coming Iraqi election would trigger a rebound in violence that President Barack Obama decided on a slow withdrawal.

Though Obama announced in February that he would end the American combat role in Iraq, officials said at the time that the president had accepted a recommendation by U.S. officials and commanders in Baghdad to maintain substantial military forces there until after the January Iraqi election to help guarantee a safe ballot. The decision disappointed many anti-war Democrats.

Under the initial plan, the United States would draw down from 14 brigades to 12 this year. The withdrawal pace

would have quickened after the January election, leaving about 50,000 forces in Iraq by September of 2010.

Gates stressed Wednesday that the idea of speeding up that pace and bringing a third brigade back by the end of this year is preliminary, tied to continued good news in Iraq. "It depends on circumstances; it may or may not happen," he cautioned.

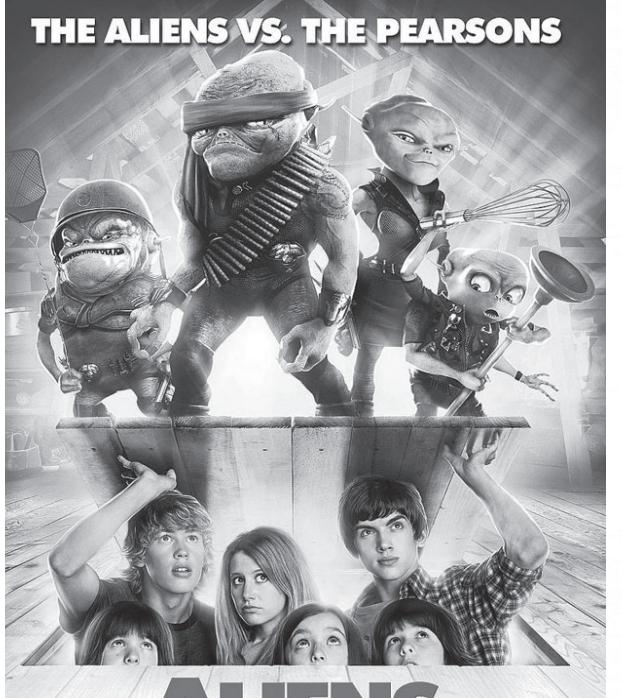
The Iraqi government welcomed the news and said government security forces were working toward the same goal but need more arms as well as training.

"This also must coincide with the speedier training and arming of the Iraqi security forces," government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh said. "We are ready to take over. The faster the U.S. troops withdraw, the faster we can fill in the gaps."

The growing Iraqi role comes as violence against civilians has declined this month. □



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## Gunmen kill Mexican policeman, family in home

**MIGUEL ANGEL  
HERNANDEZ,  
Associated Press Writer**

VERACRUZ, Mexico (AP) — Gunmen shot up and torched the home of a Mexican police commander Wednesday, killing the officer, his wife and his four children, including a 6-year-old boy.

The interior of the house in the Gulf coast city of Veracruz was completely burned, and its facade was riddled with bullet holes. Inside, police found the bodies of municipal police commander Jesus Antonio Romero and his family, Veracruz state Public Safety Secretary Sergio Lopez said. Police said the youngest was a 6-year-old boy and the oldest was a 15-year-old girl.

The motive was unclear but the pre-dawn attack bore hallmarks of Mexico's brutal drug cartels. Lopez said police believe the assailants set fire to the house by hurling grenades. He said neighbors reported hearing explosions.

"A family was sleeping peacefully when this assault occurred," Lopez said. "The house had wood paneling, and that's why the fire spread quickly and kept the young people from escaping."

Romero, 39, was promoted a month ago to deputy operations coordinator for the

Veracruz-Boca del Rio area, a hotbed of drug violence and a stronghold of the Zetas, a group of hit men aligned with the Gulf cartel.

It was unclear if the Romero and his family were killed by gunfire or the fire.

Mexico's drug war has claimed more than 11,000 lives since President Felipe Calderon deployed tens of thousands of soldiers and federal police nationwide to fight the cartels. Drug gangs have stepped up attacks on police and government officials, often gunning them down in front of their homes — but it is rare for their families to be targeted.

In a separate attack, a federal agent who had been investigating the killing of a Mexican journalist was shot dead Tuesday night at his home in the northern border city of Ciudad Juarez, said Vladimir Tuexi, a spokesman for the regional prosecutor's office.

Jose Ibarra had been investigating the death of Armando Rodriguez, a crime reporter for the newspaper El Diario who was killed Nov. 13. Investigators said they did not know if the two killings were related.

Ciudad Juarez, across the border from El Paso, Texas, is one of Mexico's most violent



Police officers stand guard outside the home of municipal police commander Jesus Antonio Romero in Veracruz, Mexico, Wednesday, July 29, 2009. Gunmen shot up and torched the home of Romero, killing him, his wife and four teenagers believed to be his children.

Associated Press

cities, with more than 800 people killed this year.

In one of the boldest offensives against the government, 18 federal agents were killed earlier this month in a series of attacks in western Mexico blamed on La Familia drug cartel. Authorities say La Familia was retaliating for the arrest of one of its top members.

The federal government responded by sending 5,500 federal police, soldiers and

navy personnel to western Michoacan state and stepping up its offensive against La Familia, which has turned to large-scale methamphetamine production.

On Wednesday, Federal Police announced the capture of six more suspected La Familia members, including a man accused of being a chief financial operator.

The arrests came a day after soldiers seized almost a half-ton of crystal

methamphetamine in raids on two drug rural laboratories in Michoacan. Authorities have raided at least 40 drug labs in Michoacan this year, including 19 in the last 10 days. □



# Car bomb in Spain proves ETA's resilience

ISRAEL LOPEZ

PAUL HAVEN

Associated Press Writer

BURGOS, Spain (AP) — The Basque separatist group's No. 1 leader was nabbed in France as he slept late last year. His replacement lasted only a matter of weeks. Over the past couple of years, Spanish and French police have put most of ETA's leadership in jail, and with each arrest comes new claims the group has been decapitated.

Yet nothing authorities do seems enough to kill the insurgency, which proved in Wednesday's massive car bombing that it is still a dangerous and sometimes lethal force.

The bomb — 440 pounds of explosives — did not kill anyone, but it shattered a 14-story barracks housing Spanish civil guard police and their families. Some 41 children were among those sleeping in the barracks and surrounding buildings when the blast went off at 4 a.m., according to Interior Minister Alfredo Perez Rubalcaba. Sixty people were injured, mostly by flying glass.

The blast blew off much of the barracks' facade, left a deep



Spain's Interior Minister Alfredo Perez Rubalcaba, third right, and other authorities look at the hole produced at the site where a car bomb exploded near a 14-story Civil Guard barracks building in the northern city of Burgos, Wednesday, July 29, 2009.

Associated Press

crater that filled with water from broken underground pipes and hurled the van that carried the bomb about 230 feet. There was no warning beforehand, no attempt to give people inside time to evacuate.

"The attack aimed to cause deaths," Rubalcaba told reporters after rushing to

the scene. "After today, we know that we are dealing with murderers, savages and lunatics. That doesn't make them stronger, but it undoubtedly makes them more dangerous."

The explosion came just days after Spain's *El Mundo* newspaper reported that Spanish authorities had received intelligence reports that three vans had been prepared as car bombs and were expected to cross into Spain from France. One of the vehicles mentioned was a Mercedes Vito, the same model that was used in the Burgos attack.

The attack occurred at a politically charged moment. The 50th anniversary of ETA's founding is Friday, and the group has a history of bombings during holidays or before Spain's economically important summer vacation period, which begins this weekend.

ETA — founded in 1959 — has killed more than 825 people since 1968, when it launched its violent campaign for an independent homeland in the Basque region of northern Spain and southwestern France. Its name is a Basque-language acronym for Basque Homeland and Freedom. In its half-century of existence,

ETA has outlasted every other major armed group in Europe, including the IRA in Northern Ireland, Italy's Red Brigades and Germany's Baader-Meinhof.

The Basque group has been hobbled by a wave of arrests since peace talks with the Spanish government collapsed in 2006, and since France stepped up cooperation following the killing of two Spanish police officers working on French soil last year.

ETA's top leader, Mikel de Garikoitz Aspiazu, was arrested in the French town of Cauterets on Nov. 17, along with a female ETA member. A few weeks later, his replacement, Aitzol Iriondo, was arrested in the French village of Gerde.

Rodolfo Ares, the head of the Basque region's Interior Ministry, told The Associated Press the arrests were taking a toll, and that ETA was losing some of its operational capacity. "Every time we arrest these terrorists they are younger and younger," he said in a telephone interview.

"They seem to have less training because the terrorist group needs to put them to work as soon as possible." Politically, ETA also suffered a serious setback earlier this

year when Basque voters for the first time chose a government allied with the ruling Socialists, rejecting a party that favored greater autonomy. Several parties closely allied with ETA were banned from taking part.

In early 2007, Spanish authorities told AP that they believed ETA had only about 15-20 "soldiers" left, supported by perhaps 100 more collaborators who would give them shelter and other logistical support.

Far more than that have been arrested since then — 88 suspects nabbed in 2008 and another 55 so far this year, according to the Interior Ministry — but still the attacks have continued.

There have been at least eight this year, the last on July 10 when a bomb exploded outside an office of the Spanish prime minister's party in the Basque town of Durango, causing significant damage but no injuries. The group's last fatal attack took place June 19, when a bomb attached to the underside of a car killed a Spanish police detective who investigated ETA.

Experts say the arrests have taken a toll, and that ETA will never be the same politically or militarily. But they say it is too soon to count ETA out.

"ETA is weakened, but it still has a lot of ability to do harm," Fernando Savater, a well-known Basque philosopher and the founder of an anti-ETA civic movement, told AP.

Juan Fernando Lopez Aguilar, Spain's former justice minister and the current president of the European Union's civil liberties commission, said ETA would never achieve its political objectives.

"Their only future is the dock of the accused, justice, conviction and jail," he said, though he warned that while the group had been weakened it would always prove attractive to disillusioned youth.

"No society is free or has immunity from the threat of organized crime and its capacity to attract members from the marginalized and socially excluded elements in society," he said. □

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# 4,000 displaced as troops battle Nigeria militants

NJADVARA MUSA

Associated Press Writer

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria — Soldiers in tanks and armored cars besieged the shelled compound of a radical Islamist sect and sporadic gunfire exploded as hundreds of innocents fled Wednesday, the third day of fighting in Nigeria's northern city of Maiduguri.

Relief official Apollus Jediel said about 1,000 people had abandoned their homes Wednesday, joining 3,000 displaced this week in four states caught up in the violence.

It is not known how many scores of people have been killed. Police say most of the dead are militants, from a group that wants to impose Taliban-style rule across this multi-religious country of 140 million. Dozens of people have been arrested.

Reporters on the ground say the trouble started with militants attacking a police station in Bauchi state Sunday. Then they attacked police in Kano, Yobe and Borno, of which Maiduguri is the capital. But President Umaru Yar'Adua disputed that, saying troops struck first.

"I want to emphasize that this is not an inter-religious crisis and it is not the Taliban group that attacked the security agents first, no. It was as a result of a security information gathered on their intention ... to launch a major attack," the Nigerian leader told journalists before he left Tuesday night for a state visit to Brazil.

"The situation is under control," Yar'Adua said. But people around Maiduguri railway station area, a stronghold of the sect, said they were kept up all night by running gunbattles.

From dawn, people started streaming out, carrying bundles of belongings and cooking pots and braziers.

Sporadic bursts of gunfire erupted there Wednesday

morning.

Also Wednesday morning, journalists saw several bodies of alleged militants sprawled outside the main police headquarters, where hundreds of people have sought safety. Others are camping at two military barracks.

The sect's compound has been cordoned off since Monday by police and soldiers reinforced Tuesday by elite troops under the command of Maj. Gen Saleh Maina.

On Tuesday, Maina launched a mortar attack on the sect's sprawling compound, which is believed to stretch for about four kilometers.

"The shelling of the strongholds of the religious sect, mosques and operational point must be precise and swift to prevent further loss of life and property in this state," Maina said.

Smoke billowed from the area after his forces attacked.

Authorities imposed curfews Tuesday night and security forces poured onto the streets. The radical sect behind the latest violence is known by several different names, including Al-Sunna wal Jamma, or "Followers of Mohammed's Teachings" and "Boko Haram," which means "Western education is sin." Some Nigerian officials have referred to the militants as Taliban, although the group has no known affiliation with Taliban fighters in Afghanistan.

Riots, religious conflicts, sectarian violence and communal fights over land and water explode periodically in northern Nigeria. According to reports commissioned over the years, they often are orchestrated by politicians and religious leaders.

Analysts say the recent trouble has brewed for months, as police began raiding militant hideouts and finding explosives and arms.

While Nigerian officials profess secularism, and



A member of the Nigerian navy patrols an oil depot alongside pipelines damaged in an attack by Niger delta militants, in Lagos, Nigeria, Monday, July 13, 2009. Nigeria's main militant group said Monday it set fire to an oil depot and loading tankers in the country's populous economic center of Lagos, marking the first attack by the group outside the restive Niger Delta region.

Associated Press

religious and ethnic intermarriage is common, religion is a sensitive, often political, issue.

Muslim and Christian leaders have condemned the latest violence.

Religious leaders saw to it that the minarets of the national mosque and the tower of the main cathedral in Abuja, the capital, were the same height to promote unity amid sectarian violence unleashed at the end of military rule — most by Muslim northerners in uniform — in 1999.

Shariah — Islamic law — was implemented in 12 northern states after Nigeria returned to civilian rule. More than 10,000 Nigerians have died in sectarian violence since then.

"Those who were excited about the possibility of Sharia have been disappointed. Corruption ... did not stop when it came in," said Junaid Mohammed, a former member of Nigeria's parliament. "People have been disappointed by the system and are looking for ways to vent their anger."

Violence was a common way of expressing political frustration in Nigeria, Mohammed added, pointing to the ongoing kidnappings and bombings in the Niger Delta, a southern region roiled by a struggle over oil money. After eight years of rule by an elected southern Christian,

all the main political parties nominated northern, Muslim candidates for the 2007 presidential race. Some said that was a necessity in this former British colony roughly split between a Christian-dominated south and a Muslim north where Arabs had ancient footholds.

Yar'Adua, who comes from an aristocratic Muslim family in the north, won the election. But he has struggled to overcome questions of legitimacy after thugs openly purchased votes, stole or stuffed ballot boxes, and intimidated voters. About 200 people died in election-related violence. □



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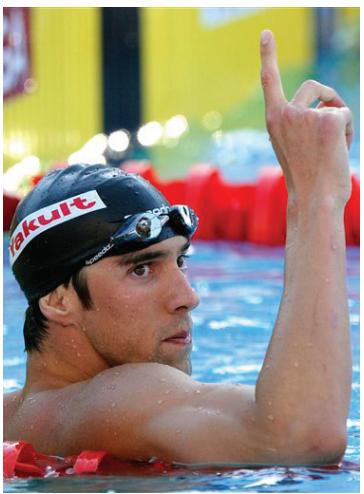
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# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY



Michael Phelps reacts after winning the gold medal in the final of the Men's 200m Butterfly, at the FINA Swimming World Championships in Rome, Wednesday, July 29, 2009.

Associated Press

## Michael Schumacher to make comeback to replace Massa

ARIEL DAVID

Associated Press Writer

ROME (AP) — Seven-time Formula One champion Michael Schumacher is making a comeback for Ferrari to replace injured driver Felipe Massa.

Ferrari said Wednesday in a statement that the German had agreed to get back in the cockpit until Massa is fit to return. The next race is the European Grand Prix on Aug. 21-23 in Valencia, Spain.

"Though it is true that the Formula One chapter has long been closed for me, it is also true that for team loyalty reasons I cannot ignore that unfortunate situation," the 40-year-old Schumacher said. "But as the competitor I am, I also very much look forward to facing this challenge."

The 28-year-old Massa was hit in the helmet by a loose part from another car and crashed into a protective tire barrier at 190 kilometers per hour (120 mph) during qualifying Saturday at the Hungarian Grand Prix.

The Brazilian received multiple skull fractures in the accident and doctors say

## After stunning loss, Phelps rebounds with record

PAUL NEWBERRY,  
AP National Writer

ROME (AP) — Michael Phelps bounced back from a stunning loss with something more familiar — another world record Wednesday.

One night after he was soundly beaten by Germany's Paul Biedermann, Phelps set a world record in the 200-meter butterfly with a time of 1 minute, 51.51 seconds — more than a half-second ahead of his previous mark, 1:52.03.

Phelps whipped around quickly to see his time and held up his right index finger when the "WR" was posted. And just like Beijing, he has taken down another of Mark Spitz's standards, this time with the 34th world record of his career — one

more than Spitz had during his brilliant run in the pool.

"I wanted to step on it in the first 100 to get out there in the clean water, and that's pretty much what happened," Phelps said. "It was a lot more pain last night than tonight." There couldn't have been a more appropriate place for Phelps to add another record to his resume. Shortly after he climbed from the pool, Italy's Federica Pellegrini sent the home crowd into a frenzy when she set the 20th world mark of the four-day-old meet in the 200 freestyle. Before the night was done, South Africa's Cameron van der Burgh broke the mark he set in the semifinals to win the 50 breaststroke and China's Zhang Lin took down Grant Hackett's

four-year-old 800 free by more than six seconds, with Tunisia's Ous Mellouli also going under the old mark but only getting silver. Both are non-Olympic events.

Zhang finished in 7 minutes, 32.12 seconds Wednesday to destroy Hackett's previous record of 7:38.65.

Earlier, Germany's Daniela Samulski and Russia's Anastasia Zueva got things rolling by setting records in consecutive semifinal heats of the 50 backstroke, another event not on the Olympic program. And let's not forget Mary Descenza of the United States, who took more than three seconds off her personal best to swim the fastest women's 200 butterfly ever — in the preliminaries, no less.

Continued on Page B13



This Sept. 13, 2008 file photo shows Ferrari Formula One driver Felipe Massa of Brazil, left, listening to F1 legend Michael Schumacher as they stand at Ferrari pits during free practice ahead of Sunday's Formula one Grand Prix, in Monza, Italy. Seven-time Formula One champion Michael Schumacher said Wednesday, July 29, 2009 he is preparing for Ferrari comeback. He will replace Felipe Massa who crashed during the Grand Prix in Hungary.

Associated Press

he will not race again this season.

Massa took his first steps since the crash on Wednesday and was later scheduled to leave the intensive care unit of the AEK hospital in Budapest. He also received a visit from Ferrari chairman Luca di Montezemolo. Ferrari said Schumacher will

undergo a special training program in the coming days to determine whether he will be able to drive in Valencia. There are six races left in the season after the European GP. "Thanks God, all news concerning Felipe is positive. I wish him all the best again," Schumacher wrote on his Web site. □



The Phoenix Mercury's Cappie Pondexter takes the ball down the court past the Connecticut Sun's Tan White in the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Uncasville, Conn., Tuesday, July 28, 2009. The Phoenix Mercury to a 95-80.

Associated Press

### WNBA Roundup

## Pondexter leads Mercury over Sun

UNCASVILLE, Connecticut (AP) — Cappie Pondexter scored a season-high 29 points and led the Phoenix Mercury to a 95-80 rout of the Connecticut Sun in the WNBA on Tuesday. Pondexter made her first six shots, and finished 12-of-18 from the field. Her first miss came just before the halftime buzzer with the Mercury ahead 45-30. Diana Taurasi, in her second game back from a two-game suspension after a drunken-driving arrest, added 17 points for Phoenix (14-5).

Continued on Page B12

# AP source: Phillies get Cliff Lee from Indians

ROB MAADDI  
AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Looking for an ace to bolster their so-so rotation, the Philadelphia Phillies acquired Cliff Lee on Wednesday from the Cleveland Indians, who traded the reigning pitcher of the year for the second straight season.

The World Series champion Phillies gave Cleveland four minor league prospects for Lee and outfielder Ben Francisco. "I'm going to miss all these guys here, but it's an opportunity for me to help a team that's in first place," Lee said after the Indians lost to the Los Angeles Angels 9-3 in Anaheim, California.

"They're the defending world champions. So as far as that goes, I'm excited."

The National League East-leading Phillies sent Triple-



Maria Sharapova, of Russia, celebrates after winning a point against Nadia Petrova, of Russia, during the Bank of the West tennis tournament in Stanford, Calif., Wednesday, July 29, 2009.

Associated Press

STANFORD, California (AP) — Maria Sharapova took what she learned from a clumsy early win and turned it into a sharp, emphatic victory over fellow Russian Nadia Petrova in the second round of the Bank of the West Classic on Wednesday.

Sharapova needed just over an hour to beat 10th-ranked and fifth-seeded Petrova 6-1, 6-2, after a three-set win over Japan's Ai Sugiyama on Monday. "I knew what I had to improve upon," Sharapova said. "I started that first match

A pitcher Carlos Carrasco, infielder Jason Donald and catcher Lou Marson along with Single-A pitcher Jason Knapp to Cleveland.

Last year, Cleveland dealt CC Sabathia, then the reigning Cy Young winner and in the final year of his contract, to the Milwaukee Brewers. Sabathia helped the Brewers into the postseason before signing a \$161 million, seven-year contract with the New York Yankees.

Lee turns 31 next month and his contract includes an \$8 million club option for next season.

"At the root of this deal was balancing the conviction of our ability to compete in 2010 with the opportunity to impact the team's construction for years to come," Indians general manager Mark Shapiro said in a statement.

Lee gives the Phillies another top starter to join Cole Hamels. The left-hander is 7-9 with a 3.14 ERA in 22 starts this season after going 22-3 with a 2.54 ERA last year. Hamels, the MVP of the World Series, has been inconsistent this season.

He's 7-5 with a 4.42 ERA, though he pitched well in a victory at Arizona on Tuesday.

The Phillies have a comfortable lead in the division — seven games ahead of second-place Florida going into Wednesday's games. They've sought pitching help since No. 2 starter Brett Myers had hip surgery in June. Jamie Moyer leads the staff with 10 wins, but he is 46 and has a 5.32 ERA.

The addition of Lee means Philadelphia has to drop someone — possibly Rodrigo

## Sharapova advances into Bank of West quarterfinals

lousy. This time the goal was to get a better start."

Sharapova, who played her 17th match since returning to the court from a nine-month layoff due to right shoulder surgery, also had a pretty finish.

"I was aggressive the whole

way through," she said. "I didn't have many letdowns and even when I made unforced errors I stayed with it."

The former world No. 1 player improved to 13-4 on the season and beat Petrova for the seventh time in eight meetings. □



Cleveland Indians pitcher Cliff Lee throws against the Toronto Blue Jays during the second inning of their baseball game in Toronto on Tuesday, July 21, 2009.

Associated Press

Lopez — from its starting rotation. Lopez, though, is 3-0 with a 3.09 ERA in four starts.

The Phillies also have Pedro

Martinez rehabbing in the minors. The three-time Cy Young Award winner signed a \$1 million, one-year contract during the All-Star break. □

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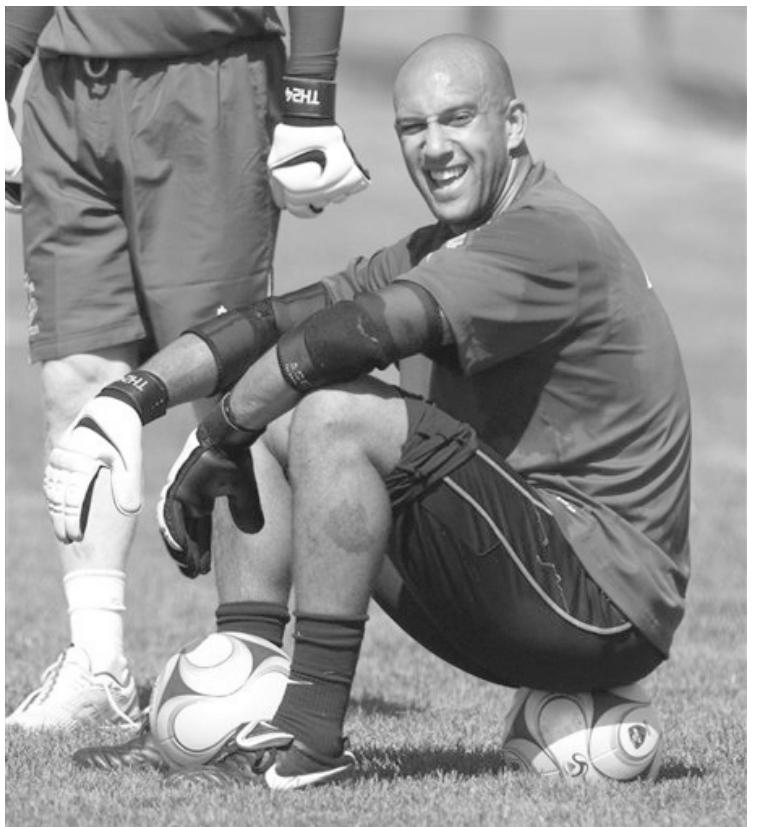
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# Goalkeeper Kasey Keller making MLS All-Star debut



Everton FC goalkeeper Tim Howard smiles during a break in practice in Park City, Utah, Tuesday, July 28 2009. The Major League Soccer All-Stars and Everton FC will play in the MLS All Stars soccer game in Sandy, Utah, Wednesday.

*Associated Press*

DOUG ALDEN  
AP Sports Writer

SANDY, Utah (AP) — Nearing the end of one of the most successful football careers an American has had, Kasey Keller is a rookie again.

The 39-year-old goalkeeper is making his All-Star debut on Wednesday when a Major League Soccer squad hosts Everton, a club Keller knows well from his years playing in the English Premier League. "This is new to me, as well. This is my first All-Star

game so I don't really quite know how it all works out," Keller said.

Not much else is new for Keller at this stage in his career. The longtime starter in goal for the U.S. has had tours with clubs in the Premier League, La Liga and Bundesliga — before joining MLS this season with the Seattle Sounders.

Keller was among the first 11 players voted to the MLS team, which was 5-0 against international clubs under the unusual All-Star format.

The league scrapped its East vs. West game and started inviting clubs from other countries.

Everton, runner-up in the FA Cup, is winding up a North American tour as it prepares for the season opener on Aug. 15 at home against Arsenal. Everton lost to River Plate 1-0 on Saturday in Edmonton, Alberta. Manager David Moyes said the talent level in the MLS has gradually increased and it has shown in the last five All-Star games. "When you do get the chance to pick the best players, good players make things happen. That's what the MLS will have. They'll have good players," Moyes said. "They'll give us a good test, but we'll give them a good test, as well."

While the Toffees date to 1878, the MLS has been around for only 13 years and is still trying to build a

reputation. "It's an important game for them. They're in the preseason and want to have a competitive game," Keller said of Everton. "There's a little bit of a pride factor here for the (MLS) guys and I think that will show (Wednesday)."

At the other end of the field from Keller will be Everton's Tim Howard, Keller's successor on the U.S. team. Howard started his career in the MLS with the MetroStars — now the New York Red Bulls — before heading overseas when he got a chance to play in Europe. Keller had already made that move and sent Howard off with some simple advice.

"He knew it was a big jump for me," Howard recalled. "But he just said the easiest thing about being a goalkeeper is you just have to save the ball. It doesn't matter what league you play

in, what level. You just have to make the saves. It was a good piece of advice."

The MLS team has only two players returning from last year's All-Star game, a 3-2 victory over West Ham. Los Angeles Galaxy forward Landon Donovan, a nine-time All-Star, was due to arrive on Wednesday, after staying home to nurse a strained left calf muscle. The other returner was Chicago Fire midfielder Cuauhtemoc Blanco, who scored against West Ham.

"It's not about getting respect any more. It's about winning games. I think we've gone past the point where it's like, 'Hey, let's show these guys we can play,'" MLS coach Dominic Kinnear said. "It's a good group of guys. They play well together automatically. They seem to click because good football minds all seem to stick together." □

## WNBA ROUNDUP

*Continued from Page B10*

Anete Jekabsone-Zogota had 15 points, and former Husky Asjha Jones added 14 for Connecticut (9-7), which lost for the first time in five games.

### Fever 85, Mystics 81

At Indianapolis, Katie Douglas scored a career high 34 points as Indiana rallied for a win over Washington.

Douglas made 9 of 19 field goals, 1 of 7 from 3-point range, and sank 15 of 16

free throws. She topped her previous high of 30 points scored against the Fever on Aug. 22, 2007, when she played for Connecticut.

Tamika Catchings scored 15 points, Ebony Hoffman had 10 points and 10 rebounds, and Briann January scored 10 for Eastern Conference-leading Indiana (13-4).

Alana Beard scored 19 points for Washington (9-8). Monique Currie and Lindsey Harding added 14 each, and Crystal Langhorne had 11.

### Sparks 76, Lynx 70

At Minneapolis, Tina Thompson scored a season-high 30 points as Los Angeles snapped a three-game losing streak by beating Minnesota. Los Angeles let a 13-point halftime lead get away and trailed by as many as three in the fourth quarter, but Thompson scored 10 points in the Sparks' late 14-6 run to pull away.

Candace Parker finished with 12 points and 10 rebounds, and Betty Lennox and DeLisha Milton-Jones both had 11 points for Los Angeles. The Sparks (5-9) notched just their second road victory in 10 tries while improving to 2-3 on its seven-game road trip.

Roneeka Hodges scored 14 points to pace Minnesota (10-8). Tasha Humphrey added 11, and Charde Houston had 10.

### Silver Stars 74, Storm 71

At San Antonio, Sophia Young hit a 3-pointer from 21 feet as the buzzer sounded to give San Antonio a victory against Seattle.

Becky Hammon led the Silver Stars with 24 points as San Antonio erased an 11-point fourth-quarter deficit. Young, who scored 15 points, was 4 of 17 before sinking the final shot.

Seattle tied it when Tanisha Wright scored on a drive through the lane with 14 seconds left.

Rookie Megan Frazee added 15 points and seven rebounds as the defending Western Conference champion Silver Stars (8-8) won consecutive games for the second time this season.

All five Seattle starters scored in double figures, led by Lauren Jackson's 19.

**In WNBA action around the league, Indiana 85, Washington 81; Phoenix 95, Connecticut 80; Los Angeles 76, Minnesota 70; and San Antonio 74, Seattle 71. □**

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Biedermann's Arena suit gave him a huge edge over Phelps' once-revolutionary Speedo LZR Racer because it's more buoyant.

Phelps stuck with Speedo for the fly, though he did change out of a model that stretches up to his shoulders, going with one that stretched only from waist to ankles.

"It didn't feel right in warmup," Phelps said. "I changed out of it and put this on. This is what I've always worn in this race."

"He actually warmed up with the full body and he just said it felt too tight and he took it off," Bowman said. "Then I noticed he hadn't shaved his chest, but I'm like, 'Just don't worry about it.'"

No worries, indeed. No one was even close.

"I said to Bob beforehand, 'I'm going to go for the 150 and whatever happens, happens. I'm going to try to hang on the last 50,'" Phelps said. "I was able to."

Bowman knew Phelps had it when he made the last turn ahead of everyone else, no matter how hard he went out. "He swam a really fast first 150 and he paid for it a little on the last lap," the coach said. "I'm sure he'll be tired, but I knew nobody was getting by him. That's how he is."

Actually, Bowman was confident from the moment he saw Phelps at lunch. Instead of fretting over the loss to Biedermann, he had that look the coach likes to see — and there weren't any concerns about someone having a technological edge. □

He was back on top. The scene was much different than a night earlier, when Biedermann blew away Phelps in the 200 free, winning by more than a full body length and snatching away one of the American's five individual world records.

The loss — Phelps' first in an individual race at the Olympics or world championships since 2005 — was followed by coach Bob Bowman's angry tirade against the sport's governing body, which allowed polyurethane suits to be used at these championships.

FINA

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Italy's Federica Pellegrini shows the gold medal of the Women's 200m Freestyle, at the FINA Swimming World Championships in Rome, Wednesday, July 29, 2009. Pellegrini also set a new world record clocking 1.52.98.

Associated Press

#### PHELPS

*Continued from Page B13*

For those who've lost count, that's 22 records in Rome, hardly living up to its label as the Eternal City. Nothing is sacred in these high-tech bodysuits, which have already helped surpass the 15 records set at the last worlds in Melbourne two years ago, with four days still to go.

Phelps couldn't wait to get on the podium to collect his first individual title at the Foro Italico.

While his name was being announced in English and Italian, he stood impatiently with his right foot already on the stand.

Finally, he hopped up to the highest rung, thrust both arms in the air with a defiant look that melted into a crooked smile.

He was back on top. The scene was much different than a night earlier, when Biedermann blew away Phelps in the 200 free, winning by more than a full body length and snatching away one of the American's five individual world records.

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FINA plans to ban all high-tech bodysuit sometime early in 2010, but Bowman said Phelps might take his goggles and go home until the rule goes into effect, believing

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# Colombia buscará mantener comercio con Venezuela tras amenazas

BOGOTÁ (Reuters) - Exportadores y autoridades económicas de Colombia

se declararon el miércoles preocupados por los anuncios de Venezuela, de congelar las relaciones diplomáticas y comerciales con el país, y dijeron que buscarán mantener

los lazos empresariales.

La preocupación surgió luego de que el martes en la noche el presidente Hugo Chávez ordenó congelar las relaciones con Colombia y retiró su personal diplomático, como respuesta a acusaciones del Gobierno de Alvaro Uribe de que la guerrilla de las FARC obtuvieron armamento vendido por Suecia a Venezuela.

Chávez pidió a sus autoridades económicas sustituir las importaciones provenientes de Colombia e incluso amenazó con intervenir a empresas colombianas que operan en su país.

El ministro colombiano de Agricultura, Andrés Fernández, manifestó que el enfrentamiento político no debería estar relacionado con el tema comercial.

“En la parte comercial haré esfuerzos con mis homólogos en Venezuela y haremos esfuerzos muy grandes en el sector privado venezolano y el sector privado colombiano, que necesitan uno del otro para que la relación comercial no se vea afectada por los problemas políticos”, dijo Fernández a la radio local.

Colombia exportó a Venezuela, su segundo socio comercial, productos y servicios por 2.246 millones de dólares entre enero y mayo, en tanto que

registró importaciones desde ese país por 238 millones de dólares en el mismo periodo.

## EXPLOSION VERBAL

“Que no metamos al comercio en esta disputa porque allí perdemos los dos países, pierden los ciudadanos, la comunidad, los consumidores”, señaló Javier Díaz, presidente de la Asociación de Comercio Exterior de Colombia, Analdex.

Por su parte, el Ministro de Comercio, Industria y Turismo de Colombia, Luis Guillermo Plata, confió en que no se alteren las relaciones comerciales por el impasse, el más reciente de una relación de altibajos entre Chávez y Uribe, cuyas ideas políticas están en polos opuestos.

“Hemos tenido situaciones similares en el pasado, (y) el comercio ha seguido creciendo”, dijo Plata, tras explicar que en la relación de interdependencia de los dos naciones no es fácil para Colombia buscar mercados alternos ni para Venezuela encontrar proveedores “de la noche a la mañana”.

Colombia comparte con Venezuela una frontera de más de 2.200 kilómetros. □

## Hugo Chávez cesa al embajador de Venezuela en Bolivia

Caracas (EFE).- El presidente venezolano, Hugo Chávez, cesó al embajador de Venezuela en Bolivia, Julio Montes, según informa ayer el diario “El Universal” de Caracas, que no indica las razones de la destitución.

El periódico, que cita una resolución oficial publicada en la Gaceta Oficial, con fecha del 27 de julio, afirma que no se ha revelado quien será el sustituto de Montes.

El Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores resolvió “cesar en funciones” a Montes, según dicha resolución, que fue publicada en la Gaceta



Oficial 39.228 de fecha 27 de julio.

Montes asumió el cargo de embajador en La Paz en

2006. Con anterioridad fue embajador de Venezuela en Cuba y ministro de Vivienda del gobierno de Chávez. □

## Diario oficial admite que la situación económica de Cuba es “grave”

LA HABANA (AFP) - El diario oficial Granma dijo este miércoles que la situación económico-financiera de Cuba es “grave”, según las cuentas presentadas por un alto funcionario del Gobierno a diputados.

El viceministro primero de Economía, Adel Izquierdo “sustentó con inobjetables cifras y hechos, la grave situación económico-financiera que atraviesa el país, a causa de los efectos de la crisis mundial”, dijo el diario, sin entrar en detalles.

El diario Juventud Rebelde, por su parte, dijo que Izquierdo presentó “una pormenorizada relatoría acerca de los ajustes al Plan de la Economía 2009”, que será sometida al plenario el Parlamento el sábado.

Hace tres meses, el ministro de Economía, Marino Muriño, dijo a la prensa que se había hecho un ajuste a ese plan y la meta de crecimiento anual del Producto Interno Bruto (PBI), pasó de una previsión de 6 a 2,5%.

Pero el domingo el presidente Raúl Castro anunció otro nuevo ajuste que sería acordado por

el Consejo de Ministros (gabinete) el martes, sin que hasta el momento haya trascendido nada de esa reunión.

Para este miércoles fue convocada una reunión plenaria del Comité Central del gobernante Partido Comunista (PCC, único), que debe tratar esos problemas, según el anuncio oficial. □

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UN CAFÉ & ROSQUILLO



Infórmese de las  
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Invertir en Aruba.

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Desde las 8:30 - 10:30 am

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## Tango Argentine Grill

Located in the Arawak Garden

**Argentina is where superb steak is not just a meal but an art form!**

Once you dine at the TANGO, Aruba's first-class Parilla, you will know that Argentine Beef is Simply the Best.

Each night the Award – winning Chef is grilling only the very finest cuts of Beef on an authentic Parilla Charcoal Grille.

Flavorful Argentine Steaks are Extraordinary and famed the World over.

Delicious and juicy cuts of mouth-watering steaks are joined by hearty side dishes with a typical Argentine Chimichurri Herb Sauce to discerningly compliment your Steak. All this is offered up by top-notch servers who take all twenty impressive cuts of their beef seriously.



Because no Parilla is complete without a magnificent bottle of red wine, your server can recommend a spectacular choice from the extensive wine list.

And speaking of Sizzle, the Succulent Steaks aren't the only things that sizzle nightly. The Tango Argentine Parilla hosts Live Music where the ambience is hotter than ever.

Tango Argentine Parilla is located in ARAWAK GARDENS in the high rise hotel section.

**[www.tangoaruba.com](http://www.tangoaruba.com)**

**Open Nightly 5pm until 11pm**

**Located at the Arawak Garden**

**Reservations are Suggested. Telephone 586 - 8600**



**Cafe the Plaza**  
(at Renaissance Marketplace, Downtown)  
International Cuisine  
Phone: 583-8826  
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner and Daily Live music.  
A Dutch style restaurant with moderate prices  
Open from 10.00 am - 01.00 am  
7 days a week  
[www.cafetheplaza.com](http://www.cafetheplaza.com)



**Tango Argentine Grill**  
(at Arawak Garden, High Rise Hotels)  
International Cuisine and Charcoal Grill  
Phone: 586-8600  
Dinner and Daily Live Music. World famous Argentine beef prepared on open charcoal grill.  
Open from 5.00 pm - 11.00 pm  
7 days a week  
[www.tangoaruba.com](http://www.tangoaruba.com)



**Salt & Pepper**  
(at Arawak Garden, High Rise Hotels)  
International Cuisine and Tapas  
Phone: 586-3280  
Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. Daily Live music by local artists and bands on our large terrace.  
Open from 7.00 am - 01.00 am  
7 days a week  
[www.saltandpepperaruba.com](http://www.saltandpepperaruba.com)



**MooMba Beach**  
(between Holiday Inn & Marriott Surf Club)  
International Cuisine  
Phone: 586-5365  
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner and Daily Live Music. Enjoy dinner by torch light... barefoot on the beach. Open from 7.00 am - 11.00 pm  
Bar open from 10.00 am - 01.00 am  
[www.moomba Beach.com](http://www.moomba Beach.com)



**Sopranos Piano Bar**  
(at Arawak Garden, High Rise Hotels)  
Bar with Live Entertainment  
Phone: 586-8622  
Extensive Cocktail menu. Daily live music, request your favorite songs and sing along! Open from 5.00 pm - 01.00 am  
7 days a week  
[www.sopranospianobar.com](http://www.sopranospianobar.com)



**Matilde**  
(Downtown)  
International Cuisine  
AAA/4 Diamond Award  
Phone: 583-9200  
Lunch and Dinner  
A refined dining experience.  
Restaurant open from 11.30 am - 11.00 pm  
7 days a week  
[www.matildearuba.com](http://www.matildearuba.com)



**Mambo Jambo**  
Latin Bar & Grill (Royal Plaza Downtown)  
International & Latin Cuisine  
Phone: 583-3632  
Lunch, Dinner, Live Bands, Salsa Dancing, Great food and good music 7 days a week. Restaurant open from 11.00 am - 09.00 pm, Bar open from 11.00 am - 04.00 am  
[www.mambojamboaruba.com](http://www.mambojamboaruba.com)



**Hadicurari Restaurant**  
(between MooMba Beach and Marriott Surf Club)  
International and Seafood Cuisine  
Phone: 586-2288  
Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner  
'Seafood with a view'  
Restaurant open from 8.00 am - 11.00 pm  
7 days a week  
[www.hadicurari.com](http://www.hadicurari.com)



# WWW.ARUBAWINEANDDINE.COM

